



JOINT NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Berrien County Provides Additional COVID-19 Data on Updated Dashboard

Berrien County, Mich. – Yesterday, the Berrien County Health Department released an updated and improved online web-based data dashboard for the public. The link for this data dashboard is found at www.bchdmi.org/COVID19.

First released on April 30th, 2020, this dashboard provides information regarding the confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Berrien County as well as information on those who have recovered from or died as a result of the virus. This dashboard also includes an interactive map of COVID-19 cases by zip code, demographic breakdowns of cases, deaths, and recoveries and charts showing trends in cases over time. Newly added information now includes important metrics, such as the weekly average of percent positive COVID-19 tests, percentage point difference in positive tests from the previous week to show a trend, trends for inpatient hospitalizations census by date, and total number of tests completed, cumulatively and per week.

“Accuracy and transparency are paramount as we continue to respond to this pandemic,” said Nicki Britten, health officer for the Berrien County Health Department. “We continue to expand and improve data reporting to make sure the public understands the trends and context behind the numbers so they know where their community stands with the COVID-19 outbreak.” While data reporting continues to improve, there are still limitations to the information provided on the Berrien County dashboard. The map shown on the dashboard does not show how or where the virus is being transmitted, nor does it show where individuals were exposed to the disease. With community-wide spread of COVID-19, there is a risk of viral transmission in all areas of the county. Residents are asked to take precautions wherever they live, such as maintaining a social distance of six feet or more from others when in public, wearing a face covering in enclosed public places, staying home when they feel sick, and keeping up with rigorous hand hygiene.

Also announced this past week by the State of Michigan is another data tool available to the public called the MI Safe Start Map. A new, [online dashboard](#) launched in collaboration by the State of Michigan and University of Michigan visually illustrates COVID-19 risks and trends in Michigan, including trends by region, providing residents with information about the status of COVID-19 where they live and work. This dashboard data is divided into Michigan Economic Recovery Council (MERC) regions, as indicated by [Governor Whitmer’s MI Safe Start Plan](#). Given differences in some of the data sources for this state-wide dashboard, members of the public may notice small inconsistencies with the percentages calculated in this State of Michigan data versus what is provided on Berrien County’s



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dashboard. Berrien County leaders are looking closely at the overall trends presented in the data, instead of tracking information solely day by day.

With the expanded information provided through the online dashboards, the Berrien County Health Department will be sun-setting the daily COVID-19 data update that had been previously provided through its social media channels on Facebook and Instagram. These social media channels will continue to be utilized to promote timely public health messages, department service information, and recommendations on how to cope with COVID-19 in safer ways for individuals and families. Moving forward, the Health Department will be providing weekly trend analysis to better interpret the data monitored to offer more meaning and context behind the numbers. The Berrien County data dashboard will continue to be updated daily with information gathered by the Berrien County Health Department and with partnership from Spectrum Health Lakeland. Anyone can access this internet-based dashboard at the link on www.bchdmi.org/COVID19 and for a more detailed breakdown of hospital testing and utilization data, visit www.spectrumhealthlakeland.org/covid19.

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